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JAGUAR Interview of Ain MERE

ACTION REQUIRED - REFERENCES

Forwarded herewith as an Attachment for passage to  
SMABOVE are copies of a JAGUAR report of an interview of  
Ain MERE conducted on our behalf on 5 October 1966. The  
report is forwarded for SMABOVE to keep them informed of  
our progress in the investigation of Eerik HEINE.

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w/att herewith

Attachment: Note of Interview h/w

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SOURCES METHODSEXEMPTION 3B2B  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2006

CROSS REFERENCE TO

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DISPATCH SYMBOL AND NUMBER

OCOW-6074

DATE 24 JAN 1967

13 January 1967

CLASSIFICATION

S E C R E T

HQ'S FILE NUMBER

ORIGINATING

OFFICE  
SB/CI/I

OFFICE

TYPIST

ajt

EXT.

7638

COORDINATING

OFFICE SYMBOL

DATE

OFFICER'S NAME

C/SB/CI

E/BC/C

1950

RELEASING

OFFICE SYMBOL

DATE

OFFICER'S SIGNATURE

OC/EUR/22 19 Jan.

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ABSTRACT	INDEX	

FORM 1-63 53

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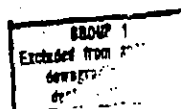
Attachment Herewith to OCOW-6074

NOTE OF INTERVIEW

I interviewed Mr. Ain MERE at the Headquarters of the Leicester City Police on 5th October, 1966. The venue was of his choosing; he did not like strangers at his house because he was under sentence of death by the Russians. As the interview was clearly by British Authorities I found it unnecessary to describe its purpose in detail or to give MERE anything than my surname.

I told MERE that the interview was not about himself personally but I wanted to ask him about some people he might have known when he was with the Political Police in Tallinn. I asked him if he knew a man called Erik HEINE. MERE, who spoke with difficulty because of a throat operation, wrote HEINE's surname down and I confirmed his spelling. He said that he did remember someone of that name but had never met him personally. He thought that HEINE was a member of the Political Police in 1941 but could not be certain about this. When the Germans occupied Estonia in August, 1941 Erwin VIKS was appointed head of the Political Police at Tallinn. At that time the Police at Tallinn were self-contained and the Political Police out in the districts were independent. In about October, 1941 Dr. SANDBERGER the head of the German Police asked MERE to recruit some interpreters and on the 6th December, 1941 MERE was appointed head of the Estonian Political Police and this included responsibility for the districts also. In this capacity he replaced a man called LEPIK who was arrested by the Germans and executed about a year later. MERE asked SANDBERGER to produce for him his own file and he found on it allegations by LEPIK that he, MERE, was a Russian agent. It was at about this time that MERE was told by VIKS, who continued to be in charge of the section at Tallinn, that the Political Police had a file for HEINE. MERE did not see this file but gathered from VIKS that it contained allegations of political double-crossing including suggestions that HEINE had worked for both the Germans and the Russians. I asked MERE if he could be thinking of some other person called HEINE but he felt that this was the same man as I had mentioned. He thought that HEINE must have disappeared between January and April, 1942. He

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2

had heard nothing more about HEINE until I had mentioned his name. On the 1st April, 1942 the Estonian Political Police were entirely reorganized on a plan devised by MERE into six sections and full responsibility for the Police in the districts was assumed by the Headquarters in Tallinn. After this date MERE was more likely to have known the position of HEINE in the Political Police but the numbers were large. Although he could not guarantee that HEINE was not with the police after April, 1942 he thought it most unlikely, particularly as he knew about the file which existed for him. MERE had no idea when HEINE might have joined the Political Police in the first place.

I then asked MERE what the arrangements were for the interrogation of suspected Soviet agents. He explained that the Estonian Political Police, while concerned with Estonian Communists in Estonia, had nothing to do with suspected Soviet agents as such people were always interrogated by the German Deutsche Feld Potizei. There was only one occasion when a Soviet agent was interviewed by a member of the Estonian Political Police and on that occasion MERE did it himself. The person concerned was Riho RANDES who was parachuted by the Russians into Estonia as an agent and captured. This man was a personal friend of MERE and it was therefore arranged through Dr. SANDBERGER that MERE should interview him.

I then asked MERE if he remembered Neeme RUUS. He recalled him well as the 3rd Secretary of the Estonian Communist Party and said that he was interrogated by a German called BURHMEISTER because this German spoke Estonian. He did not think that anyone of the Estonian Political Police took any part in this interrogation. I then asked him if HEINE could have interrogated either RUUS or any Soviet agents and MERE said that he was sure that he did not do so.

I then asked MERE to recall the time when he was the Administrator of the 20th Estonian Division. He said he was not the Administrator. The position was that he quarrelled with Dr. SANDBERGER about some incidents concerning the sale of arms by the German Police to Estonian and the subsequent prosecution of the Estonians. As a result of this he left the Political Police and became the commander of the 1st Battalion of the Estonian Legion. The Legion was later enlarged to a Brigade and MERE, while still a Battalion Commander became responsible for organizing the 2nd Regiment.

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3

He told me that the 45th Regiment was first commanded by Col. KURG who died in November, 1943 when his place was taken by Major WENDT. MERE knew all the Battalion Commanders in the 45th, 46th and 47th Regiments. I asked him if HEINE was among them and he said that quite definitely he was not. He did not hear HEINE's name mentioned at any time as an officer of the Legion and he felt that he would have done if this had been so.

I concluded by asking MERE if he could tell me of anyone still available who would have known HEINE when he was in the Political Police. He said that the only person he could think of was VIKS who went to Australia.

We know from our records that Erwin VIKS was born on 20.5.97. and we think he went to Australia in about 1950. If he is still alive it is assumed that he will be in Australia at the present time.

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